

REMARKS

The Office action mailed on 27 November 2002 (Paper No. 5) has been carefully considered.

The specification and Abstract are being amended to correct minor errors and improve form. Claims 1, 2 and 7 thru 19 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 3, 5 and 6 are being amended, and new claims 20 thru 26 are being added. Thus, claims 3 thru 6 and 20 thru 26 are pending in the application.

In paragraph 2 of the Office action, claims 1-4, 7-9, 12-15, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) for alleged anticipation by Miura *et al.*, Japanese Patent Publication No. 05-188840. In paragraph 4 of the Office action, claims 6, 11 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for alleged unpatentability over Miura *et al.* '840 in view of Ogasawara *et al.*, Japanese Patent Publication No. 08-202206. In paragraph 5 of the Office action, claims 5, 10 and 16 were merely objected to for dependency on a rejected base claim, but were indicated to recite allowable subject matter.

Independent claims 20 and 21 recite that an outer circumference of said mass body and an inner circumference of said photosensitive drum along an entire longitudinal length of the photosensitive drum are separated from each other by a gap, and are not in contact with each other. In contrast, the prior art cited in the Office action does not

disclose or suggest such a feature. Specifically, Miura *et al.* '840 shows a mass body in close proximity to, and in fact in contact with, an inner portion of a photosensitive drum.

Thus, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is clearly not appropriate. Furthermore, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is also inappropriate because there is nothing contained in Miura *et al.* '840 or in other references to suggest the inventive feature described above.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance, and early issuance thereof is solicited. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

No fee is incurred by this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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